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REMARKS

The Office Action mailed October 13, 2005, has been carefully reviewed and Applicants note with appreciation the identification of allowable subject matter.

By this Amendment, claim 18 has been canceled, claims 1, 5, 7, and 10-15 have been amended and new claims 19-21 have been added. Accordingly, claims 1-17 and 19-21 are pending in the application. Claims 1, 7 and 15 are independent. In view of the foregoing amendments and the following remarks, favorable reconsideration of this application is respectfully requested.

As an initial matter, Applicants have corrected informalities in the specification.

The Examiner objected to claims 7 and 14 as containing informalities, and rejected claims 1-6 under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite. By this Amendment, Applicants have amended the claims to remove the informalities and bring the claims into conformity with 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph. Favorable reconsideration in view of the amendments is requested.

The Examiner rejected claims 1-4, 7-11 and 14-17 under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 4,300,877 to Anderson, and further rejected claims 1-4, 7-11 and

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14-17 as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 4,321,026 to Lambertus. Also under 35 U.S.C. 102(b), the Examiner rejected claims 1, 3, 4, 7-9, 11 and 14-17 as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 5,593,702 to Harris et al. ("Harris"). Finally, the Examiner rejected claims 2 and 10 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Harris.

The Examiner stated that claims 5 and 6 would be allowable if rewritten to overcome the rejection under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, and to include all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. In addition, the Examiner objected to claims 12, 13 and 18 as being dependent on a rejected base claim but stated that claims 12, 13 and 18 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form to include all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

As set forth herein, claim 1 has been amended to include the subject matter of claim 5 directed to the annular section having a plurality of substantially circular apertures for receiving the first *and the second* pluralities of fastening elements. In addition, the apertures in the annular section have been further defined to specify that they are "through-passing" and that both the first and the second pluralities of fastening

elements *pass through* such apertures. This is not shown or suggested by the prior art.

Anderson discloses an annular section 13 having a first plurality of fastening elements as represented by the screws connecting die plate supporting body 10 and annular section 13 in Figure 1 thereof. In addition, Anderson discloses a second plurality of fastening elements in the form of the pivotable screws illustrated to the left and right of Figure 1 which connect the die plate supporting body 10 to the water-tight housing or main body 20. However, unlike the present invention as set forth in amended claim 1, the apertures in the annular section receive *only* the first plurality of fastening elements. There are no apertures in the annular section for receiving the second plurality of fastening elements.

Lambertus discloses a water box assembly having an annular section 9 coupled between the water box main body 10 and the die plate 2. The annular section 9 is secured to the die plate 2 by a first plurality of fastening elements 25, with the die plate in turn coupled to the housing 3 by screws as shown in Figure 1 of Lambertus. A second plurality of fastening elements are used to couple the flange of the water box main body 10 to the annular section 9, as shown by the screws adjacent reference

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numeral 9. While the screws adjacent reference numeral 9 pass through the flange portion of the annular section, there are no through-passing apertures in the annular section through which the first plurality of fastening elements 25 can pass. Instead, elements 25 merely engage interfacing surface portions of the annular section and die plate as shown in Figure 1. Therefore Lambertus does not disclose or suggest through-passing apertures through which both the first and the second pluralities of fastening elements pass as set forth in amended claim 1.

Harris discloses a water box for an underwater pelletizer with an annular section 37 between the water box main body (shown in Figure 3 thereof) and the die plate 39. The annular section 37 is secured to the housing (Figure 3) by a first plurality of fastening elements in the form of the screw at the top of Figure 3. The flange of the water box main body is coupled to the annular section 37 with a second plurality of fastening elements represented by the screw at the bottom of Figure 3. As there are no through-passing apertures in the annular section, neither of the upper or lower screws pass through such annular section as set forth in amended claim 1.

For at least the foregoing reasons, claim 1 is patentable over the prior art. Claims 2-6, 20 and 21 are also in

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condition for allowance as claims properly dependent on an allowable base claim and for the subject matter contained therein.

More particularly, claims 5 and 6 are in condition for allowance in accordance with the Examiner's indication of allowable subject matter.

New claim 20 is patentable in that the prior art does not disclose or suggest that the plurality of substantially circular apertures includes a first plurality of aligned holes and a second plurality of aligned holes, the first and second plurality of fastening elements passing through the first and second plurality of aligned holes, respectively.

As amended herein, claim 7 is directed to a water box assembly for a pelletizer having a die plate, the assembly having a water box main body and an inline adapter defining a cutting chamber adjacent the die plate and enclosing a cutter blade hub and cutter blade. The inline adapter is sealingly connected to the die plate, and the water box main body is sealingly connected to the inline adapter in use but is detachable therefrom for access to the cutter blade hub without breaking the sealing connection between the adapter and the die plate. The water box main body is connected to the inline adapter by a plurality of

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elongated fastening elements which *pass through* a plurality of substantially circular *aligned* apertures in a flange of the water box main body, in the inline adapter and in the die plate. This is not shown by Anderson, Lambertus or Harris.

As already discussed, the second plurality of fastening elements in Anderson, which connect the die plate supporting body 10 to the water-tight housing or main body 20, *do not pass through apertures in the annular section or inline adapter 13*. Rather, the apertures in the inline adapter receive *only* the first plurality of fastening elements. And the first plurality of fastening elements pass through only the annular section and the die plate; they do not pass through a plurality of substantially circular apertures *in a flange of the water box main body that are aligned with* apertures in the annular section and the die plate. Nor are the various fastening elements in Lambertus as discussed above, or the upper and lower screws of Harris, in alignment with one another, respectively, as set forth in claim 7. Therefore the structure of claim 7 is not shown or suggested by Anderson, Lambertus or Harris, either alone or taken together.

Finally, claim 15 has been amended herein to incorporate the subject matter of claim 18. Therefore, claim 15

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is in condition for allowance in accordance with the Examiner's indication of allowable subject matter in claim 18.

Claims 8-14, 16, 17 and 19 are in condition for allowance as claims properly dependent on an allowed base claim and for the subject matter contained therein. More particularly, claims 12 and 13 are in condition for allowance in accordance with the Examiner's indication of allowable subject matter.

An Information Disclosure Statement is being filed concurrently with this Amendment and the Examiner's consideration of the prior art noted therein, while considering the foregoing remarks, is requested.

With this Amendment it is respectfully submitted that the present application is in condition for allowance. Should the Examiner have any questions or comments, the Examiner is cordially invited to telephone the undersigned attorney so that the present application can receive an early Notice of Allowance.

Respectfully submitted,

JACOBSON HOLMAN PLLC

By Sp C Jacobson Reg No. 40,495 for
Harvey B. Jacobson, Jr.
Reg. No. 20,851

400 Seventh Street, NW
Washington, D.C. 20004-2201
Telephone: (202) 638-6666
Date: April 13, 2006
HBJ:SCB_R: \SBAILEY\04-06\P68283US.amd